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Across the country, and particularly here in Florida, the high costs of excessive government regulation and red tape are threatening to drive farmers out of business. Small farmers, who have fewer resources to keep up with the growing number of federal mandates, are being hit especially hard.

The bipartisan support for putting an end to many of the costly, unnecessary regulations that are making it difficult for our farmers to make ends meet and feed our country was evident at a U.S. House Agriculture Committee hearing I attended earlier this year. Our witness was Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson. Typically, when an administration official like Jackson testifies before a Congressional committee, the hearing follows a predictable script, regardless of which party is in the White House. Committee members from the president's party ask softball questions to allow the witness to explain great things the administration is doing, while members of the opposite party ask tough questions designed to cast the administration's actions in a bad light.

The hearing with Jackson did not go according to script. In all the hearings I've attended as a member of Congress, I've never been to one like this. Almost all the members of the committee — Republicans and Democrats — were up in arms over the EPA's agenda and all the new regulations the agency is considering imposing on our farmers.

As I listened to members on both sides of the aisle describe how existing and proposed federal regulations are hurting their constituents, it became clear that people across the country, from both parties, are just fed up with the EPA's anti-farm, anti-jobs agenda. They're pursuing regulations — which could never pass Congress — that are proving devastating for the

agriculture community, our manufacturers and our job creators.

The high costs of federal mandates are hurting every sector of the American economy and costing us much-needed jobs. The 2010 Federal Register contains 24,914 pages of rules and regulations that American farms and businesses must obey. The total cost of all these mandates amounts to \$1.75 trillion each year and forces farms and businesses to spend nearly 9 billion hours filling out regulatory paperwork. That's time and resources farmers could be spending to buy new equipment, expand their markets and hire new workers.

Most of these regulations are written by the executive branch and are never reviewed or approved by Congress. Unfortunately, the Obama administration is adding new mandates, rather than focusing on ending excessive, unnecessary ones. Many of these new or proposed regulations would severely impact our farmers, from EPA regulating greenhouse gases, to overlapping regulations on pesticides, to proposed restrictions on how much dust can get kicked up on farms and ranches.

All told, the administration has proposed 4,257 new regulations, according to OMB, which estimates that 219 of these new mandates would have an economic impact of more than \$100 million each to implement. OMB estimates that the seven most expensive will cost more than \$1 billion apiece, and as much as \$100 billion total.

We need to move in a new direction. This fall and winter, the House of Representatives will review some of the most costly existing and proposed regulations to consider their impact on economic growth and job creation, and we will vote to repeal or block many of these unnecessary mandates. We will also consider the REINS Act (Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny), which requires Congressional approval for new rules that would have a significant economic impact.

By cutting through the red tape and repealing many of the costliest mandates, we can get the federal government off the backs of farmers and let them do what they do best — grow safe and healthy food, feed our country and the world, and help drive our economy.